

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 03406 190048Z
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TAGS: CPRS, MX
SUBJ: DEVELOPMENTS IN RETURN OF AIRCRAFT AND AUTOMOBILES

REF: MEXICO 2811

1. ON MARCH 14, CONSUL GENERAL MCANINCH AND CONOFFS DANIELS AND FICHTE CALLED ON LIC. FERNANDO BAEZA, EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE FEDERAL ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE. ALSO PRESENT WERE THE INSPECTOR GENERAL, THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS AND THE CHIEF OF THE NEWLY FORMED OFFICE FOR THE CONTROL OF VEHICLES. FOLLOWING ABOUT AN HOUR'S DISCUSSION, THE CG AND CONOFFS SPENT ABOUT 25 MINUTES WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, AT HIS REQUEST.

2. IN RESPONSE TO BAEZA'S REQUEST, THE CG PROVIDED HIM WITH A LIST OF 288 AIRCRAFT OF AMERICAN REGISTRY KNOWN OR REPORTED TO BE IN MEXICO. THE LIST INCLUDED THE FEW REMAINING CONVENTION CASES FOR WHICH A RELEASE ORDER HAD NOT ALREADY BEEN ISSUED, THOSE CASES WHICH THE EMBASSY CONSIDERED TO BE POTENTIAL CONVENTION CASES, AND ALL THOSE THE STATUS OF WHICH WAS UNKNOWN TO THE EMBASSY. IT WAS EXPLAINED TO BAEZA THAT THE LIST WAS ALL-INCLUSIVE AND THAT INVESTIGATION WOULD PROBABLY REVEAL THAT MANY OF THE AIRPLANES HAD ALREADY RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES, THAT SOME OF THEM MIGHT NOT BE IN GOOD ENOUGH CONDITION
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 MEXICO 03406 190048Z

TO MAKE THEIR RETURN WORTHWHILE, AND THAT SOME MIGHT NOT, BECAUSE OF THE INVOLMENT OF THE OWNER IN THE VIOLATION OF SOME MEXICAN LAW, BE RETURNABLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GENERAL PROVISIONS OF THE CONVENTION.

3. THE CG PROMISED THAT THE LIST WOULD BE PRUNED INSOFAR AS POSSIBLE WITHIN TWO WEEKS, AND A REVISED LIST PROVIDED.

BAEZA AGREED THAT IN THE MEANTIME, HIS PEOPLE WOULD REVIEW THE LIST AND LOCATE THOSE THEY COULD. HE SAID THAT IF A RETURNABLE AIRPLANE WAS FOUND IN THE POSSESSION OF ANOTHER GOM AGENCY, HE WOULD RETURN THE PLANE AND REPLACE IT FOR THE AGENCY FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S STOCK OF CONFISCATED CRAFT. BOTH HE, AND LATER THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, REITERATED THAT THE GOM WOULD KEEP CHARGES FOR RETURN TO A MINIMUM, ORDINARILY NO MORE THAN THE COST OF ANY PARTS WHICH HAD BEEN REPLACED WHILE THE AIRPLANE WAS IN CUSTODY. NO CHARGE WOULD BE MADE FOR LABOR. BAEZA SAID THAT ONCE THE SLATE IS WIPED CLEAN WITH REGARD TO AIRCRAFT, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE WOULD BEGIN TO WORK ON AUTOMOBILES IN ITS CUSTODY. HE MENTIONED A FIGURE OF 5,000 BUT IT WAS NOT CLEAR THAT THESE WERE ALL OF AMERICAN REGISTRY.

4. FOLLOWING THE MEETING, THE CONOFFS RETURNED TO THE CHORE OF ACTUALLY OBTAINING CUSTODY OF THE AIRCRAFT WITHIN THE EMBASSY'S CONSULAR DISTRICT FOR WHICH RELEASE ORDERS HAD BEEN ISSUED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE. A PROBLEM IMMEDIATELY AROSE WITH RESPECT TO N-609-W, WHICH WAS IN THE PHYSICAL CUSTODY OF THE MEXICAN ARMY. THOUGH BAEZA HAD TOLD THE CONOFFS THAT HE HAD MADE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 300,000 PESO CHARGE DEMANDED BY THE ARMY TO BE DROPPED, THE OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE PLANE INSISTED HE HAD NO INSTRUCTIONS TO THAT EFFECT. CONSUL FICHTE ADVISED LIC. BAEZA OF THE DIFFICULTY AND ANOTHER MEETING WAS ARRANGED FOR THE MORNING OF MARCH 15. DURING THE MEETING, BAEZA TELEPHONED THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND MADE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS. FICHTE SUBSEQUENTLY WENT TO THE MILITARY BASE TO CONFIRM THE UNDER-

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 MEXICO 03406 190048Z

STANDING AND MAKE THE PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS TO ALLOW THE OWNER'S REPRESENTATIVE TO ENTER THE BASE AND MAKE ANY NECESSARY REPAIRS. ONCE THE PLANE IS AIRWORTHY CONSUL FICHTE WILL ACCEPT DELIVERY AND THE PLANE WILL IMMEDIATELY DEPART FOR THE US.
THOMPSON

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